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Pulpit Preaching

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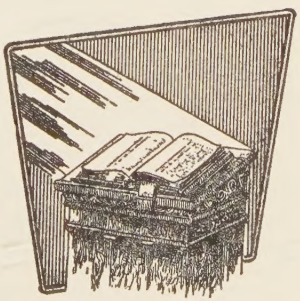

BOOKS FOR PULPIT PREACHING

God and Caesar in East Germany by Richard W. Solberg is a record of contemporary Christianity which deserves the kind of venerated attention we customarily give to the story of early churchmen and their struggles with godless tyranny. This moving, disturbing, and inspiring volume is a chronicle and interpretation of the conflicts between church and state within the past fifteen years. (Macmillan, 294 pp., $4.95)

Resources for Worship, edited by Clarice M. Bowman, will become a companion to worship leaders as well as those who wish an abundance of source materials for private devotions. Not only are less-frequently known quotations and prayers brought together meaningfully, but the total worship experience is highlighted with inspiration and imagination. (Associated Press, 383 pp., $4.95)

William Barclay, whose name is a byword among preachers who have been greatly benefited by his commentaries, homiletic aids, and scholarly studies, now turns his thought and scholarship to **The Mind of Jesus,** a book which records in communicative prose the basic events essential for an understanding of Jesus' teaching. Here are the words of a wise and experienced scholar; they will not reflect the thoughts of all Christians; they warrant consideration. Barclay's genius for extracting meaningful ideas from familiar passages makes this book especially useful for sermonizers. (Harper & Brothers, 340 pp., $5)

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WORTH QUOTING

E. PAUL HOVEY

One day a missionary visited a mosque in Delhi, India, where the acoustics are so perfect that a word whispered under one dome, travels to the next, increasing in sound, until from the seventh dome the sound can be heard throughout the city. This day, while thousands were gathered together to pray, a priest standing beneath the dome, cried, "There is only one God. God is good; God is just; and Mohammed is his only prophet."

The missionary shuddered as the words reverberated from dome to dome until they could be heard over the entire city. Turning to his guide, he said, "I'm going to say something under this dome." Before the guide could stop him, the missionary had said, "Jesus Christ is King of Kings, Lord of Lords; he shall reign forever." As his words spread his little daughter clutched his hand. "Daddy," she said, "you can't stop it now, can you?"

That is the way our lives, our words, and our deeds spread to other people. Impressions, rushing from one to another, grow, whether for good or evil. Once we have started

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Next month's themes will be "The Christ of St. Mark," a sermon series by Dr. J. R. Brokhoff, and "Editors' Choice," three sermons without a common emphasis.

Pulpit Preaching

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LIVING LIKE CHRISTIANS

THE ELEVENTH COMMANDMENT

Ralph W. Sockman, Christ Church, New York, New York

An old friend of mine, now a Presbyterian minister in London, called on me at my church. He noticed the subject announced on the church bulletin board. It read, "The Eleventh Commandment." He said, "I am wondering if you are going to discuss the theme which that subject would suggest in England. Then he reminded me of what a well-known British novelist some years ago wrote about one of her characters. The author described a worldly woman in her book by saying that she had no compunction about breaking the Ten Commandments, but she did have concern for an Eleventh Commandment, which was, "Thou shalt not be found out."

But this is not what I have in mind when we speak of the Eleventh Commandment. Our theme is based on the words of Jesus in the thirteenth chapter of John, the thirty-fourth verse: "A new commandment I give to you that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another."

The question at once arises, why did Jesus call this a new commandment? Back in Leviticus, the Old Testament law reads, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." That Jesus was well aware of this old commandment we know from something he said. Recall the occasion when a lawyer asked him: "Teacher, what is the great commandment in the law?" Jesus answered: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it, you shall have your neighbor as yourself." Having thus referred to this command, why did Jesus on the occasion of his Last Supper say, "A new commandment I give to you that you love one another." Why call this a new commandment?

I

May I suggest, first, that it is because Jesus gave a new priority to brotherly love.

Other religions have many beautiful sayings about love. One of the most entrancing interpretations of religious love and tolerance which I ever heard was given by the great Hindu teacher, Radhakrishnan, before the central committee of the World Council of Churches meeting in Lucknow, India. His tribute to Jesus was memorable. But the central ideal of Hinduism is holiness. And holiness, as taught by Hinduism, is not an eager loving of others, not a sacrificial giving of oneself for others. But it is a self-absorbed guarding of one's personality from evil. The goal of the Hindu, as I understand it, is blamelessness, not brotherly service.

And mere blamelessness, mere freedom from taint, did not satisfy Christ. He demanded something more outgoing, more serviceable. The rich young man who came to Jesus asking the secret of eternal life had kept the Ten Commandments from his youth up. But that was not enough. The test was whether he was keeping the commandments because of regard for his own reward or because of his regard for the good of others. That is why Jesus tested him further by bidding him go and sell his pos-

sessions and give to the poor.

Jesus made clear that the distinguishing mark of a Christian is love. Whatever else his followers may have, love they must have. He declared, "By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

Hence, one reason that Jesus called the command to love one another a new commandment is that he gave it a new priority.

II

A second reason is that he gave love a new intensity. Let us be fair and admit that religious faiths, other than Christianity, have demonstrated splendid manifestations of love.

Consider the noble Greeks, for example. Yet Christ's command to love had a new quality not found in the teaching of the Greek Stoics who preceded him. The Greek was taught by his Stoic teachers to keep his love within his own control. For instance, he was to hold his love for his child within bounds so that he would not be broken-hearted by its death. The Greek Stoics stressed the ideal of emotionlessness.

Such teaching, noble as many of the Greeks were, was too cold and loveless for Christ. He taught men not to limit the range and depth of their love but to let it out, out in sympathy for the suffering, out in Good Samaritanism toward strangers, out in affection for little children. Consider the difference at this point between Jesus and Epictetus, one of the noblest of the Stoic teachers. Epictetus, with all his splendid virtues, seemed to feel that the care of little children was beneath his concern. He asked, how can he who has to teach mankind go looking for something to heat the water in for the baby's bath? Jesus, on the other hand, with a world mission to carry out, had time for the littlest and the least. He said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven."

Christ brought a love which went beyond the Greeks and begot a spirit which has given new status to childhood and womanhood, built hospitals for the sick, and homes for the aged. Yes, Christ's kind of love was a new commandment in the Greek world.

Moreover, Christ's love struck a note new to his own people, the Jews. I have high regard for the Jewish faith and I have many friends who hold it. When I read the Old Testament, I am thrilled by the generous love of Joseph who forgave and fed his brothers, by the magnificent love of Moses who sacrificed himself for his people, by the beautiful and unenvious love between David and Jonathan. And I feel, as did Jesus, the greatness of the Old Testament commandment, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Is there any higher measure of love than that?

III

Well, let's stop to ask, what it is to love our neighbors as we love ourselves. How are we to love ourselves? Certainly it does not mean that we are always to like ourselves. If we did that, we would be blind to our own faults. The fellow who likes himself is rather insufferable. We say that he is "stuck on himself." And the fellow who is stuck on himself is usually stuck with himself. Nobody else wants him.

But to love ourselves, as the Bible teaches us, is to hold ourselves in such high respect that we always wish for ourselves our highest good. This may often make us dislike ourselves for what we do, and make us ashamed that we are the sort of persons who do such things.

Hence to love our neighbors as ourselves does not mean that we are always to like them or to like what they do. But it does mean that we are always to wish for them their highest good; that we are to respect their personalities as we respect our own; that we are to seek for them the enjoyment of their rights as we wish to enjoy our own; in short, that we

are to do unto others as we would that they should do unto us.

This last summation of brotherly love seems such a complete and perfect measure that we have come to call it the Golden Rule: Do unto another as you would that he should do unto you.

But the Golden Rule can become very tarnished by our common lack of use. We can leave the Golden Rule lying around unused until we come to think almost any little trivial act of kindness or good will is a fulfillment of it. Perhaps to some of you that dollar you will put in the plate at church — you see, I am giving you the benefit of the doubt here — will give you a clear conscience because it will make you feel that you are a pretty good fellow after all, better than the fellow next to you who only gives a quarter. We are so prone to measure the Golden Rule by the standards of those around us, and it is easy to look around and see how unbrotherly people are until we think any act of generosity is proof of our love. Thus we lower our concepts of brotherly love, lessen our expectation of it and shorten our manifestation of it.

Or we can tarnish the Golden Rule not only by our lack of use but by our misuse. Suppose I am a school teacher and a pupil has seriously broken the rules. As the culprit stands before me, I say to myself: "I must practice the Golden Rule and do to that boy what I would want done to me if I were in his place. And what would that be? Why, to be let off, of course." So I let the wrongdoer off. But would that be best for the boy? No. I must have the wisdom to see what is best for the lad in the long run. I must have some standard by which to measure the boy's highest good. And this is what Christ gives. He helps us to see one another in the long light of God and our highest good. Therefore, we can say that Christ helps us to keep the Golden Rule golden.

IV

According to John's Gospel, it was at our Lord's Last Supper that he said: "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another." Then he added: "Even as I have loved you, that you love one another." Christ's love for us is our standard of measuring our love for others. That is more than the old commandment to love our neighbors as ourselves. That is more than doing unto others what at the moment we think we would like to have them do to us. Christ gave us a new commandment, that we should love one another even as he has loved us. He gave the last full measure of devotion. He lived and loved and died not only for his friends, and for his neighbors, and for his countrymen, but even for his enemies. Truly such love goes beyond the Ten Commandments. That is why we call it the Eleventh Commandment.

Sometimes we hear the expression, "He is a Christian and a gentleman." The saying seems to imply that to be a gentleman adds something to the qualities of a Christian. Well, I have known some persons who called themselves Christian and yet they were no gentlemen. I can understand why the little girl prayed: "O Lord, make all the bad people good and make all the good people nice." To be a real Christian is to be a true gentleman.

Yes, and then something more. The late Dick Shepard, beloved minister of St. Martin's-in-the-Field, London, was wont to say that to be a Christian is not merely to refrain from doing bad things which no gentleman would think of doing, but a Christian is one who does good things which a gentleman might not think to do. A gentleman has been defined as one who never puts his feelings before the rights of others or his rights before the feelings of others. So far, so good. But Christ calls us to seek and study until we understand the feelings of others and to sacrifice until we help others to secure their rights.

V

Consider how Christ's Eleventh Commandment adds to the Ten. A gentleman is decent enough to obey the commandment, "Honor your father and your mother." But Christ filled family love with such tender concern and true fidelity that parents and children are worthy of love.

A gentleman of course, obeys the commandment, "You shall not kill." But Christ went beyond that to serve and sacrifice in order to save and enrich life.

A gentleman keeps the commandment, "You shall not commit adultery." But Christ gave a new social standing to womanhood which ennobles the marriage bond.

A gentleman obeys the commandment, "You shall not steal." But Christians are called to respect property rights and also to "bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ."

A gentleman adheres to the commandment, "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor." But Christ said to his followers, "You shall seek the truth and the truth shall make you free." — free from prejudice and suspicion and blinding hate.

A gentleman obeys the tenth commandment, "You shall not covet your neighbor's house or your neighbor's wife or anything that is your neighbor's." A Christian not only refrains from coveting but he seeks to further his neighbor's welfare.

Yes, Christ called his followers to keep the Ten Commandments and then also a new commandment, "You shall love one another even as I have loved you."

Do you say: "That is asking too much to be expected. All that we can be expected to do is to be decent and let the devil take the hindmost"?

Well, let me remind you that if all our ancestors had been content just to be decent and let the devil take the hindmost, there would be no countries decent enough to live in today. We enjoy our lands and our liberties because there has been a love at work more dynamic than mere decency, more redemptive than mere respectability. And that something more is the love manifested by Christ.

THE SPACE-AGE FAMILY

William H. Likins, Covenant Methodist Church, Worcester, Massachusetts

Scripture: Ephesians 4:1-16

May 5, 1961, may become as important to Americans as October 12, 1492. We are living in a new era—the space age. Although we live in essentially the same universe as when Christopher Columbus touched our continent, dramatic changes have taken place in the intervening 469 years.

During the same period, dramatic changes have taken place in the life of the family so that today it finds itself thrust onto a few frontier. Some look at the new demands and opportunities with optimism, some with pessimism, and others with indifference. While great changes have come about in the development of family living, this primary social group has the same needs it always has had: emotional support and creative love.

I

Prior to launching an American into space there was extensive preparation. Think of the gruelling hours of careful work which went into selecting and training the astronauts. Consider the hundreds of technologists as well as thousands of workmen of all kinds who were engaged in endless hours of meticulous research and development of "Project Mercury." The overall cost of more than 4 billion dollars means that each American bought $2.25 ticket to Commander Shepherd's trip to outer space.

The family—and this message assumes that we are talking about the Christian family—should be as careful in the preparation for the launching of its human cargo as the technicians at our missile ranges were in preparing to send the first man into space.

Yet we send our children to church school thirty or forty times a year, take them to church with us half a dozen times a year, teach them by word and example to compete with others rather than with themselves, and then wonder why they fail to get off the launching pad. We give them a second-rate example and encourage a wrong set of values and then say, "I can't understand what happened."

We reject them by our efforts to mold them into what we ourselves failed to become. We are prone to say "no, no" at the wrong time rather than commending their efforts for good. Our attitude may be: "You are unacceptable as you are. You must act as we think you should if you are to have our approval." Children, however, need to know that we love them for what they are now and not merely for what they can become tomorrow or next year.

It is in the family which supplies the right kind of love, emotional support, and Christian example that character is molded, personality is formed, religious interest is created, attendance at church and family worship is encouraged that the life of the next generation will be established.

It was in that kind of home that Jesus of Nazareth matured: "Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with God and man." (Luke 2:52) Jesus learned more about divine-human relationships in the humble Galilean home of Joseph and Mary than from any other source. His figures of speech about God's relation to man are drawn frequently from the atmosphere of the family: God as Father, men as brothers, persons as "sons" or children of God.

The home still is central in teaching. It is hard to teach children on Sunday about God if the only time the child hears the name of God at home is in an oath.

How can children be taught about the love of God if parents hate each other, and if children are either overprotected or rejected by the parents?

How can children be taught about the forgiveness available through Jesus Christ if forgiveness is not part of the child's home atmosphere, or if parents are demanding an adult-level perfection which is unattainable for the child?

How can children be taught about the meaning of prayer and how to pray if table grace and family worship are not a part of the home life?

The home and church must work together if the spiritual preparation of the child is to be adequate to meet the needs of the space-age family.

II

Americans gave a minimum of attention to the man in space program until it was announced that before the eyes of the television cameras the United States would try and put one of three men into space. After bad weather forced the cancellation of the shot on May second, tension mounted. Re-scheduled for May fifth, the Redstone rocket—after several anxious "holds"—was ready to take Commander Shepherd into space.

Undoubtedly one of the most difficult phases of the period for Commander Shepherd was that of being sealed in the space capsule for more than three hours before the rocket was fired. Thorough physical, mental, and emotional preparation had been given him for just such waiting.

A similar, though less dramatic, countdown takes place in the life of the family. After all the preparation has been completed and final steps have been taken to try and assure the successful launching of the children into the world of tomorrow, parents wait anxiously for the moment of liftoff from the launching pad of the

home. Up to that moment there is hope, though no guarantee that the launching will be successful.

The countdown in the home is the period when the children are off of your knee and on your heart. It is the hour when you continue to pray that what they have learned about self-acceptance, self-reliance, and self-commitment to Jesus Christ will equip them to meet whatever emergencies lie ahead. While you wait, you pray. You trust their future to the God who blessed your home with their presence.

III

Although the hours seem like years, the moment comes for the liftoff.

How exciting it was to hear the commentator describe the liftoff of the Freedom VII. The fuel was ignited. Slowly the rocket was lifted from its resting place on the pad. As the rocket increased its speed and soared toward space the commentator described how Commander Shepherd had jettisoned the escape tower. The technicians were relieved that the project went as had been planned and practiced over a period of many months, and that none of the duplicate safety devices had to be used.

Most parents are concerned about the successful launching of their children into new worlds beyond the horizon. The Christian family is less worried about malfunctioning on the launching pad as it is for the safety of the human cargo. Thus a Christian home takes every precaution to assure a successful liftoff.

Care is taken so that when the moment of liftoff comes—entering school, adolescence, college, work, the armed forces, or marriage—all will be "AOK!"

A precaution which will help assure the successful launching of a child onto a new frontier is "Train up a child in the way he should go . . . and go that way yourself." More successful launchings of human lives into new world might be achieved in Christian family living if you and I would stop saying, "Do as I say" and began demonstrating quietly by our lives the beauty of the Christian life. Repulsed by words we are attracted by example. When families learn the value of exemplary living in the home there will be fewer malfunctions at the time of liftoff.

IV

Fortunately for Alan Shepherd and his family as well as for the prestige of the United States the capsule went into space as planned. Several times the commentator repeated, "Commander Shepherd was not alone when he entered space. He took his family with him. Wherever we go we take our family with us: to school, to work, to church; yes, to outer space. We take our conflicts, our loves and our hates, our hopes and our fears.

As important as it has been to put a man in space is the importance of putting a man at the center of the Christian family. The Hebrew scriptures underscore the importance of the male by making him the priest of of the household who offers sacrifices on behalf of the assembled family. The Jews will respect the male as the head of the family and a figure of authority. This has remained one of the strength's of the Jewish family. This is not to suggest that Father become autocrat of the breakfast or any other table but merely to help him re-enter the family and be given his rightful place and function. Only after man has assumed his rightful functions in the family is he really ready to travel in space.

There is need for husbands and fathers as well as wives and mothers to be thought of as home-makers. The Christian family is a unit where two people—man and woman—leave their separate ways of living and become one in God. They retain different opinions and feelings but organically as well as symbolically they have become one. Their individuality attains new meaning by becoming a mutuality. Henceforth these two work together as one. The husband

brings home the bacon; he brings home the applesauce, too. But he does more. He helps the wife share the love and affection the children need to mature in Jesus Christ. It takes more than the labors of a Mother—however wonderful she may be—to do the work of the family.

V

While Commander Shepherd's ride into space did not go as far, high, and long as Russia's Major Yuri Gagarin, the United States did take a step toward putting a man into orbit.

In a similar way the Christian family needs to see that each of its memmers not only is launched into space but also that they are placed in the right orbit.

Some families try to place their children in the orbit of being like the Joneses—or the Kennedys.

Others try to put their children in the orbit of "getting what you can while the getting's good."

Some try to put their children in the orbit of competition with the children in the next tenement or down the street rather than competing with their own past record. Children need to learn to do better today than they (not brother, sister or playmates) did yesterday, last week, several months or years ago.

Others strive for the orbit of success where it is important for the children to marry into the right family, have an income of five or more figures, live in the right kind of house in a good neighborhood, have upperclass morals, and attend the church and local clubs where the influential people go.

Lives will be destroyed before they reach their destination if Christian families veer off into these orbits. The only orbit for the Christian family is the doing of God's will: "Seek first God's kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well."

Once a life enters the orbit of doing God's will, success is determined by the service rendered rather than how much money is made. Marriage is measured by whether or not the two people entering it have the proper respect as well as the love for each other to live together till death do them part rather than trying to get into the "right" family. A house is evaluated in terms of its potential of becoming a home rather than the size of the mortgage payments or its location in the community. A church is selected wherein the entire family can find God's will for themselves rather than because it has status symbols. Individuals learn that moral responsibility in action as well as attitude is essential—and will take them beyond so-called upper class morals.

Another orbit into which we need to direct our families is that of achieving convictions. The influential children of every community are those who know what they believe and why. The Christian family makes it possible for children to have ample opportunities to learn how to be Christian, how to accept one's self as well as others for what they are, and how to achieve worthy goals as part of a group rather than competitively trying to outdo the neighbors' children. All of us are obligated to help our children—and the children of other people if we do not have our own family—toward the orbit of worthy goals in life.

Putting lives into the right orbit takes both knowledge and skill. The Bible in the home is the ideal manual of instruction wherein knowledge can be gained. Skill will come by repeated efforts of applying that which is learned from the textbook of the Christian life.

VI

Commander Shepherd, when asked by newsmen the most difficult phase of the trip, replied, "The recovery." His answer came as a surprise to most people who thought the most hazardous part would be the launching, the experience of weightlessness, or the force of eleven G's on his body

as he re-entered the earth's atmosphere. Shepherd commented that he had created the problem himself by taking off his space helmet too soon.

Perhaps the most difficult phase of the space-age family's journey to new frontiers is the experience of "recovery." We have been lifted to outer space where radiation is deadly and pressures are great. When we are returned to earth we remove the protective covering too soon and unwisely leave ourselves exposed to the world around us.

Having traveled to outer space we can no more return to the family gathered around the fireplace in the parlor than that we can return to the old-fashioned sailing ships of Columbus' era for transportation to new worlds. Technological advancements of the past three score of years have made a return to the "good old days" utterly impossible. Our new task is to recover the quality of the experience around the fireplace and use it today for the renewal of Christian family living. The new emphasis will be upon the quality rather than the quantity of time spent together in the family.

With Dad at work, Mother at home or at work while the children are at nursery or day school and after school at the church or club, we may have less time but not any less need to recover the quality of Christian family living which was known in earlier generations.

Two hot and numerous cold wars, a major depression, and a series of economic recessions, as well as the concomitant social disorganization of human society make it imperative that there be a recovery of Christian family living. Where people belong to Jesus Christ and seek to follow His way, divorce rates are lower, respect for other people is higher, and concern for others is broader. This is not a coincidence. There is a positive correlation between those who honor Christ in the family and stability in family living.

Christianity is rooted in the family and the family at its best is centered in Christ. That is not to suggest that a Christian family does not have any problems. The Christian family, however, has a plus quality to it. It knows how to resolve difference of opinion, how to work together in love, forgiveness, and harmony for the good of the group. Jesus Christ brings a new significance into the family: women are ennobled as mothers rather than as breeding machines, men are given a new function in the home, and children are loved for what they are.

While this is not new to us the tragedy is that it may not stir us. We know the truth of the experience but we have been mesmerized by the fantastic view around us as we have been whirling through the space of new and changing attitudes toward the family. Technology, rather than helping us to recover Christian family living, has become a new God for many families. Unfortunately we have learned more about controlling outer space than controlling and directing the life of the family.

While the Christian faith has the message and the thrust to send men into space and return them safely, do you and I have sufficient concern for the future of our families and the world at large to recover the quality of the old-fashioned home and fit it into our modern living?

The only way we can achieve our destination is via a religious faith-centralized in Christ Jesus our Lord. Family prayer and Bible reading may be less prevalent in the families of our day but not any less important than in earlier generations. The Christian family must have some expression of religious faith to survive in the space-age.

VII

The real proving ground of the nation's future is the home and not at Cape Canaveral. The history of our country will be determined by the quality of its family life during

the next quarter of a century more than by what happens in Mercury Control Center or on the Florida sands.

While the pressures and demands upon the space-age family may be somewhat different from other days there remains the need for understanding love of each member for the other before the human cargo can be launched successfully.

When we take Jesus Christ out of the capsule in which we have sealed Him we will see that He still is alive and alert to our needs in the space-age. In the language of space travel, when the family makes Christ central to their living they will find that He is "AOK!" If Christ is not made central in the home it will be "NO GO" all down the tracking-stations of life. You are deciding whether it will be "AOK!" or "NO GO" by the way you are living moment by moment in your family—with or without Him.

HOW DOES YOUR GARDEN GROW?

Rev. Lester L. Haws, First Methodist Church, Yonkers, New York

This is the season when farmers and pseudo-farmers tell one another, "My beets are the best I've had." "And you ought to see my corn!" The conversation goes on by the hour. Everyone who grows anything — from a professional farmer to the housewife with African violets — is interested in talking about gardens.

God loved a garden. He chose a garden setting as the home of man. The story is in the first chapter of Genesis. "And the Lord God took man, and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it."

I

A garden is essential to man's life. His life is dependent on what grows there. But a garden is more important than just a place to grow food. Even children in a nursery can use their minds imaginatively, asking "Mary, Mary, quite contrary, How does your garden grow?" How disappointing it would be if the answer was that the garden was growing well, thank you, "with cabbages and carrots, all in a straight row." The words of the nursery rhyme are different, "Silver bells, and cockle shells, and pretty maids all in a row." A child uses his imagination.

Let us use our minds imaginatively as we ask: How does your spiritual garden grow? "Not so good," you say? Could it be that you are careless about the choosing of your seeds? Some people say, "Oh, don't talk religion in the summertime. No one's interested. The people are on their way to picnics, to the beaches, to visit friends." I am not impressed. I remind you if the vegetable gardens aren't planted in the summertime so that they can be harvested in the fall, we'll be mighty hungry in the winter. Summertime planting and cultivation of spiritual values is mighty important. But it does take work. An unknown poet wrote:

"I like to see the flowers grow,
To see the pansies in a row:
I think a well-kept garden's fine,
And wish that such a one were mine;
But one can't have a stock of flowers
Unless he digs and digs for hours.
I envy men whose yards are gay,
But never work as hard as they;
I also envy men who own
More wealth than I have ever known.
I'm like a lot of men who yearn
For joys that they refuse to earn."

A garden can be a place to cultivate friendships. A few weeks ago I sat with some friends in a garden spot in Connecticut. We were there to honor a mutual friend on the occasion of her eighty-eighth birthday. During the afternoon someone suggested the singing of some favorite songs and hymns. Friendships grow

richer as people sing together those hymns that praise God. Imagine yourself in your favorite garden spot. In this service of music and the spoken word we would cultivate the good seeds of your life and make your life beautiful and useful.

We sing the hymn, "We Plow the fields and scatter the good seed on the land," at Thanksgiving time, but we should sing it oftener. It is an expression of gratitude to God for His care of farm and fellow. It was written by a newspaper man in a small town near Hamburg, Germany, who also became a Commissioner of Agriculture. He became desperately ill. He now realized how empty his life was of real values. He resigned his highly-paid position and returned to the little town near Hamburg where he had been literary editor. He resumed his former tasks, but with a difference. He now brought to his tasks a religious enthusiasm. He wrote a poem called, "Paul Eardman's Festival." In it he pictures thes "Peasant's Song." Here is a Commissioner of Agriculture writing a poem from a childish appreciation of the goodness of God. He thinks of all of the things that God gives man to make the land fruitful — the land itself, sunshine, rain, snow, and God even throws in for good measure the wayside flowers, the birds, and the stars. Surely the least we can do is to say "thonk you" to God for "all of his benefits."

Come to the garden. For it is a place to hear God speak to you. Many people have found a new spiritual life in a garden. Augustine walked in the garden of Ambrose in Milan, Italy, and heard a Voice saying, "Take and read." He picked up a copy of the New Testament and read a message that made him a new creature in Christ. His Christian thinking has influenced church people since the fourth century.

Come to the garden. Walk with God. He will talk with you if you will permit Him.

III

A garden is a place of decision. Meditate long enough and Truth will be yours. Then the more you give away the more you retain. Washington Gladden, an American minister who lived from 1838 to 1918, believed that Christian Truth should be used to fight wrong. He preached his sermons until he helped send Boss Tweed to jail. He preached cooperation between workingmen and employers. He was told to "stick to the gospel" but he disregarded all threats. Wherever he found wrong, he faced it with the Truth of Christ. While lesser men left the church, he believed that others should stay in the church and help make it great. His teachings were firmly based on Jesus Christ. He said, "Religion at the beginning was largely a matter of tradition; today I am resting on what I have verified. What Jesus has taught us about the Father in heaven and the Brother on earth looms large." It is eighty-one years since the hymn, "O Master, let me walk with Thee," was written. There still exists in our world much of the wrong that Washington Gladden fought. There is the same intolerance of the prophet-citizen, the same under-cover tactics of slander and innuendo, by greed and the will to power, that existed in the days of the "Robber Barons." Let us commit ourselves to performing those tasks that will help our neighbors so that together we can reclaim the earth as the garden where God may walk in the cool of the evening.

FOUR ANCHORS THAT HOLD

Aaron N. Meckel, First Congregational Church, St. Petersburg, Florida

Scripture: Acts 27:29

St. Paul was being taken a prisoner to Rome. What had begun as a peaceful journey suddenly turned into a storm of fury. Euroclydon, the most feared wind of those parts, began to lash both ocean and ship with elemental fury. Something had to be done to lighten the ship. So the first day they threw the tackling overboard. The second, some of the provisions. Finally, not far off, they sighted the island of Melita and sounded for depth. But in the twenty-ninth verse of the twenty-seventh chapter of this dire diary we learn that "fearing lest we should fall upon rocks, we cast four anchors and wished for the day."

Now I submit that a ship all sails and no anchors wouldn't have survived that storm! It is a terrible thing to be at the mercy of every wind that blows and not to have any anchors to cast out. A faith which is not made to weather the gale is no faith at all. A newly arrived chaplain entered a war barracks in France to address a group of soldiers. Said he, "Boys, I will let you choose what I shall give you, a funny story, or something more serious." He had mistaken a tragedy for a farce. There was a long silence. Finally, a long, lanky fellow with a drawl in his voice said, "Well, Parson, this group you see is going over the top in the morning. And if you don't known what to give us, I suggest that you go back where you came from." "And fearing lest we be dashed upon the rocks we cast four anchors."

I

Suppose you throw out this anchor of your faith, I believe that this Universe in which I live has a God of love, righteousness, and wisdom at the heart of it. "If I had but one question to ask the Sphinx," someone has said, "it would be this: Is the Universe friendly?" In other words, wanted, a faith that can weather a drouth which has brought blight to thousands of homes; that can survive the many blasted hopes and disappointments of life; that can anchor the heart of the boy who writes, "I've looked everywhere for work since graduation, but can't find any." To feel that in spite of the tempest of Euroclydon, there is an Eternal Goodness, a fundamental meaning at the heart of things — that is to have an anchor for the storm. We are never to think that because we are followers of the Christ, no tempests shall come our way. But God does promise something precious to those who serve and love Him: namely, that there shall be a peace that will prevail throughout the tempest, and a spirit of triumph that shall survive any storm. That lonely prophet, who once looked upon a city desolated through its own greed and sinfulness, saw only one thing that remained: the righteousness and love and wisdom of Almighty God. It was the one thing Jesus saw from the altitude of His Cross. He could still say "Father." I asked a young man at a city hospital, who had lost both wife and little son, "Does life still hold a content of meaning for one like you?" To which he replied, "O yes, my Faith in God — that remains." Then throw out that anchor.

II

Here is the second: God has placed a moral law at the heart of man which rewards obedience and punishes evil. Immanuel Kant used to say that two things filled him with awe: the starry heavens above and the moral law within. That does not mean that God pays wages every Saturday night. But of one thing we may rest assured: God's mills grind slowly, but surely! "Be sure your sin will find you out."

That Old Testament statement is stamped, not only at the heart of the universe, but graven on the heart of Man.

This is a great anchor to throw out at a time when we are apt to get discouraged at all the evil in our world; in a world where the innocent suffer with the guilty, and where man's inhumanity to man makes countless thousands mourn. True, the night looks dark. But wait! The morning dawns, and with it comes that universal judgment in which each man must face his life and give account.

A man gave himself up at a police station not long ago. He had defrauded others of a lot of money. One of the first statements he made was this: "I didn't enjoy spending a cent of it!" The moral censor had not yet been sinned away.

It is a great thought to think that our entire system of criminal justice and law is founded upon that moral law. Who is it that first whispered into the heart of man, "This is right; that is wrong?" Who really judges whether one is guilty or innocent? It is He that "sitteth in the heavens and whose throne inhabiteth eternity."

God has placed His moral law at the heart of man. Washington never gave better advice to his countrymen than when he said, "Endeavor to keep alive in your breast that little spark called conscience."

III

Again, God has placed His liberating Gospel at the heart of His Church. What a great article of our Faith this is: "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church!" We need to retrieve that word "Catholic" from the misconception that it is the possession of a Pope, or hierarchy, or sect. The word means universal, general. There is no such thing as a Roman, Congregational, or Methodist faith. The Gospel at the heart of the Church recognizes but one faith, the Christian, and but one Church, the assembly of the twice-born. We need men and women, who are big enough to see through all this clash of sects, through the fanatical fury of religious partisanship, into the true and universal Church of God. We need men and women who will do more than stand about and bemoan the fact that the world is wicked; who will join themselves with men and women of goodwill everywhere to make this a better world.

Here is a great anchor to throw out in a time like this. Amidst all artificial barriers and distinctions of class, color and creed, here is the Church catholic, lifting up her Gospel to say, "One is your Lord, all ye are brethren."

IV

"We cast four anchors" and here now is the fourth: "God hath placed eternity within the heart of man." Not a mere wish-thinking for something which is not! But a revelation of God within the heart of man, rational, reasonable, possible. Real faith is never an option, an elective. When I say that there is a God of love, righteousness, and wisdom at the heart of the universe; that there is a moral law at the heart of man; that I believe in the holy, catholic Church, and now, that God has placed eternity in the heart of man — much more is meant. It means that God has revealed these certainties to His children, and that we are to accept them by faith. You don't argue anchors in a storm. You throw them out and see if they will hold. So with faith.

"God hath placed eternity at the heart of man." This is not a bit of pleasant addenda, a kind of belated postscript with which God stamps life at death, to make it end happily ever after, like the many fairy stories we read. This faith entered into the world with the believer at birth. It was a faith at his heart when he was young, step sure, eye clear, pulse firm. And when the scaffolding of life is taken away, it remains surer than ever.

A friend of the great Tennyson once discussed immortality with him, asking him whether or not he believed in it. The old seer, his face red with excitement, replied "Why, if I couldn't believe that, I'd sink my head in a chloroform handkerchief and be done with it all." And remember, a Greater than Tennyson stood by the graveside of His friend and said, "I am the Resurrection and the Life."

A friend tells how he went through the catacombs of ancient Rome, where the early Christians secretly gathered for worship. The tombs are rude and lack artificial beauty. But they open into a large aperture where one can read their remarkable faith in the many murals. These murals picture the beauty of Heaven, and over them all might well be written the words, "They who have overcome." When you walk through these ancient passageways you no longer doubt the reality of the words of St. Paul: "O death where is thy sting; O grave where is thy victory!" Night breaks forth into sunrise. Death is swallowed up in life. It were as though one's dear mother had tucked him into bed again at night, and standing at the door were saying, "Good-night, beloved, and fear not. I shall call you — in the morning!"

ON MISSING OUR OPPORTUNITIES

William Goddard Sherman, Melrose Park Methodist Church, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida

Not long ago I heard a sermon in which the speaker made much of his conviction that Jesus was vastly mistaken in his selection of Judas as a disciple. It was pointed out that while Jesus usually was a shrewd judge of human nature, in this case he failed to see the true character of the one who was later to betray him. The point at issue at the moment is not whether Judas was "predestined" to be a traitor, nor whether Jesus did in fact err in his judgment. Rather we are thinking in terms of the opportunities which come to us, and it is my feeling that Judas could have been a faithful disciple and follower of the Christ. The opportunity was presented, but Judas did not grasp it.

Perhaps it sounds trite, but it is nonetheless true, that life is made up of opportunities which come to us. The nature of life for each of us is determined by what we do with these opportunities.

No more telling event is recorded in the gospel narratives than the story of the rich young ruler who came to Jesus to inquire concerning eternal life. Someone has pointed out that the young man was enthusiastic about life, and enthusiastic about the Teacher and the spiritual values he presented. It was not a matter of indifference to the things of the spirit. It was precisely because he was interested in the things of the spirit that he bothered to come to Jesus with his question. And because he missed his opportunity, the whole nature of his life followed a different pattern.

I

From the experiences of both Judas and the rich young ruler we can learn this fundamental truth: opportunities come with conditions. We are not forced into accepting them. But they always come with the provision that unless we do accept them they vanish. Ralph Waldo Emerson captures the truth in a memorable statement: "The days come and go like muffled and veiled figures sent from a distant friendly party, but they say nothing, and if we do not use the gifts they bring, they carry them as silently away."

There is always a high cost to life's highest; sacrifice is bound to be involved at some point. But that which we sacrifice is always on a lower level, and, therefore, it is tragic that so many will choose the lower, and

forfeit the opportunities of the highest. We tend always to accent the word sacrifice, and many are scared away at that point. But we forget that we always sacrifice to something, and that something is always higher, richer, and nobler. One wonders whether we can honestly call it sacrifice when that which we receive is of greater worth than that which we surrendered.

The choice is ever presented to us. Lowell voices the truth in these familiar lines:

Some great cause, God's new Messiah,
offering each the bloom or blight,
Parts the goats upon the left hand,
parts the sheep upon the right;
And the choice goes by forever
'twixt that darkness and the light.

So the opportunity comes to us, as it did to Judas, and to the rich young ruler, to follow the new Messiah and find the light, or to turn away and walk the path of darkness.

James Freeman Clarke pointed out that the Church which proclaims the Messiah has been embarrassingly unwilling to follow the Messiah. He quoted an historian as remarking that if the Lutheran Reformation had been accepted by the Roman Church it would have saved Europe five hundred years of relapse and loss. There is no measuring the bloodshed which would have been spared or the persecution which would have been avoided if the opportunity had been seized. But a lost opportunity hopelessly divided the Church.

In the same vein it can be said that the bonds of fellowship would have been strengthened had Judaism accepted the teachings of Jesus. The Christian movement would not have become separated from the main branch, and Christians and Jews would be united today.

II

We cannot undo the past, but we can do something about the present. In all of our divisiveness we have missed an opportunity for a deeper and richer fellowship with God through an association with God's people who may think differently and worship Him in a different manner. There are many proponents of universal religion, but this is not what we here suggest. As a matter of fact, no universal religion will speak satisfactorily to every man's need and temperament. Most of the universal religions appear to be nothing more than an amalgamation of certain concepts from various religions. The particular ideas chosen from each of the religions depends upon who makes the choice.

Somewhere there must be a common meeting ground before God. Protestant denominations fight as bitter enemies; Protestants and Catholics regard one another like the plague. And this is to say nothing of the divisions and the tensions which exist between us as Christians, Jews, Moslems, Buddhists, and Hindus.

We speak frequently of the world's need for understanding, but nowhere is this understanding more desperately needed than in the field of religion. Not only are we missing an opportunity to strengthen the bonds of human relationships as we worship a common Creator, but we are depriving ourselves of a richly rewarding content in our own experience of religion.

III

At the center of the Christian Gospel is the concept of a God who comes into the life of all who desire Him. Remember the words of Oliver Wendell Holmes:

Lord of all being, throned afar,
Thy glory flames from sun and star;
Center and soul of every sphere,
Yet to each loving heart how near!

Life affords every man the oppor-

tunity for this Majestic God to be known and experienced as a deep reality within his own soul.

Man apart from God can never be his best self. Francis de Sales wrote that a man left to himself is "no better than a parched ground, whose cracks and crevices on every side testify its need of the gracious rain of heaven." Until we come into a right relationship with the Source of our being we can never attain the highest.

Here is our tragedy: not that we are doomed to littleness, but simply that we are content to remain so because we refuse to grasp the opportunity to enrich our spirits with the divine Presence.

In the midst of life's grim regimen the question that falls from so many lips is this: "What is the meaning of it all?" This is the basic question that must be answered before we can direct our energies to any vital purpose. A noted psychologist said that a full one-third of the patients who come to him are suffering from no neurosis which can be clinically diagnosed. They suffer only from a feeling of meaninglessness and uselessness about life. Their lives are not linked to anything that really matters.

A sense of meaning and purpose in life cannot come if we feel isolated and adrift. We must feel related; we must be a part of the larger whole. In Christ's concept of fellowship with the Father we are given the opportunity to relate our lives in a vital way. Like all opportunities, it can be lost forever. Not because God withdraws it, but because we become hardened and insensitive, and incapable of fellowship with Him.

IV

The opportunity comes to us, moreover, to build a society upon the sure foundations of love and truth. It is not an easy task which confronts us in our world. Indeed, as someone has pointed out, life is never a smooth and well-rolled lawn of soft ascents. A world of peace, growing out of the love and goodness in human hearts, does not just happen. It takes planning, dedication, and cultivation.

There is an old legend of a statue representing opportunity. The figure was a man with a small tuft of hair on his forehead; the rest of his head was bald. On his feet were wings. His own explanation of himself would be somewhat like this: The one tuft of hair is for men to grasp when I first present myself. After I have passed it is too late. The wings indicate that I do not wait long for men to make decisions. They must act promptly or their opportunity vanishes.

We need to recall this challenging figure in the kind of world we face. The tomorrows are being shaped in the crucible of today. If we want a world where we can live without fear, we must mold that world now. Tomorrow the opportunity will have gone. Indeed, as one writer put it, tomorrow the world itself may be gone.

It needs to be engraved upon our consciences that men get the kind of world which at bottom they want, and which they are willing to work to achieve. Reinhold Niebuhr has written tersely of "men with noble intentions who instead of being as wise as serpents, are as harmless as doves and as stupid as chickens." And it is nothing short of stupidity to sit back and wait with folded hands for a decent world to evolve.

Every life is an opportunity to build a better world. We waste our powers by using them only selfishly. Then we complain bitterly: "Why doesn't God do something?" Every life is an opportunity to enable God to do something. Through us the power of God's creative goodness can be channeled into human society. Through our lives the truth of God can come to a desolate world.

BOOKS FOR PULPIT PREACHING

from Page 2

Deliverance to the Captives is a collection of sermons with prayers delivered by Karl Barth to inmates in the Prison of Basel, Switzerland, where from time to time he has been invited to conduct worship. The sermons, which generally are brief. informal, and devotional, give us glimpses not only into the heart of the great theologian but also words to shore up the faith of those who are beyond prison walls. (Harper & Brothers, 160 pp., $3)

This Is Protestantism by Arthur W. Mielke is not the ordinary kind of book on this essential topic. The story of Protestantism is here told with verve and challenge, and the heritage is given a contemporary and dynamic significance. Along with discussions of the fundamental doctrines are clearly distinguished guides for an understanding of what Protestantism affirms according to its historical contexts and persistent affirmations. (Fleming H. Revell, 127 pp., $2.50)

WORTH QUOTING

from Page 2

something on its way we cannot stop it.

Mrs. Paul Halladay

* * *

While playing with his toys on the living room floor, little Bobby suddenly became very quiet. His mother noticed that he was staring intently at a picture of his late father on the piano. "Mamma," he said with a sigh, "don't you wish Daddy could step out of that picture?"

The lad expressed what we all admit to be true; an image, however good, cannot take the place of a living presence.

Gerald S. Pope

* * *

To try is not good enough; you must succeed in this worldly contest.

* * *

Every man's work, whether it be literature or music or pictures or architecture, or anything else, is always a portrait of himself, and the more he tries to conceal himself, the more clearly will his character appear in spite of him.

Samuel Butler

* * *

A little thing gives perfection, but perfection is not a little thing.

* * *

A fellow who was suddenly made blind entered the hospital and after a long period of treatment regained his sight. What impressed him most was that all the nurses whom he'd learned to love were Negroes. "When I couldn't see," he said, "there was no way to distinguish. It gave me a terrific feeling to realize that with your eyes closed there are no such ridiculous distinctions as skin color."

Harry L. Golden

* * *

If fifty million people say a foolish thing, it still remains a foolish thing.

Anatole France

* * *

This is a story making the rounds in South Africa. A dark-skinned native is going into a church. The pastor stops him. "Where are you going?" The native says, "I am the new janitor, I am going in to clean the church." Says the pastor, "All right, but make sure you do not pray."

* * *

It is better to be small and shine than be great and cast a shadow.

* * *

It's a pity each new generation has to learn the facts of life for itself. It's a pity so much good material is always wasted in the effort. And, above all, it's a pity that the gigantic folly of war invariably upsets all values, so that, for a while, black seems white, and white seems black,

(Continued on Page 28)

IN DEBT TO EVERYONE

Paul S. Rees, World Vision, Inc., Pasadena, California

Text: I am debtor both to Greeks and to the barbarians; both to the wise and to the unwise. Romans 1:14

Phillips takes this sentence and draws it out in flowing prose thus: "I feel myself under a sort of universal obligation, I owe something to all men, from cultured Greek to ignorant savage."

Have you any such feeling of debt as that? Does your sense of obligation carry you that far?

To be sure, when the first of the month comes around, and our bills begin to pour in, some of us do feel that we are in debt to everybody! But our creditors in fact are few, and they are nearly all confined to the community in which we live.

Here, on the other hand, is a fiery-spirited first-century Christian announcing to the world that he has a debt to pay to every man under the sun, and that everywhere he goes he is laboring to pay out that debt. The question I raise, therefore, is this: Have you and I any feeling of kinship with this man Paul? Do we know what he is talking about? Has "debt" taken on this larger, global meaning in our minds?

Recently, going through an old file, I came on a clipping entitled "Payable to God." It arrested my attention. The writer describes an interesting bit of musing: "Along with the bills from the electric light company, the coal dealer, the landlord, I sometimes imagine myself taking out of the mailbox on the first of the month a bill inscribed with the words: Payable to God."

It's worth pondering. You see, God, the Creator and Redeemer, is life's Number One Creditor. When once it really dawns on us what kind of world it is that he has created for us and what kind of savior he has provided for us in Jesus Christ, we shall then — and not till then — understand what Dr. M. S. Rice meant when once he cried in my presence, "We are not here to collect our dues; we are here to pay our bills!"

It was precisely this that St. Paul felt when he gave us our text.

"I am debtor!"

To such a man I want to listen.

The text, first of all, offers us an unlimited recognition of debt.

"I am debtor," he freely acknowledges, "both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians; both to the wise and to the unwise." The phrase "to the Greeks and to the Barbarians" is actually more inclusive than it sounds. By "Greeks" is meant the whole Greek-speaking civilization of Paul's day, and by "Barbarians" is meant all other peoples and tribes.

It is Paul's way of saying, "I have found in Christ something so utterly necessary to life and so richly meaningful — something that alters the basic wrongness in man's relationship to God — that I now owe it to every man I can reach to share with him the good news."

What a facing up to debt this is!

It climbs over racial barriers. Before Paul was captured and converted by the Lord Jesus Christ it never would have entered his mind to say to Gentiles, "I am in debt to you." As a patriotic Hebrew and Pharisee, he would have said, "You are in debt to me!" Pious Hebrews of ancient

times would thank God each day for not being born "a leper, a woman, or a Gentile."

Hebrews, however, have no corner on racial superiority-feelings and attitudes of contempt for peoples of other nations and races. Some of our Anglo-Saxon ancestors were slaves from the islands of Britain in Roman times, and Servius the Roman referred to them as "the stupidest and ugliest slaves in the market." The long-established name by which the Chinese referred to outsiders was that of "Foreign Devil." Among the aboriginal tribes of India are the Santals. One day a friend of mine asked one of them what they called themselves in their language. He said they used a word which meant simply, "Men." "And what is your word for non-Santals?" asked my friend. The reply was "Enemies." Their world was divided into "Men" and "Enemies."

Now the "mind of Christ" in Paul — or in anyone else — is a tall mind. It is so tall that it looks right over these mischievous walls that man, in proud sinfulness, has erected between himself and others. It matches the universalism of sin with the universalism of God's redeeming love. This, for the Christian, is the vision splendid and the debt unlimited.

Furthermore, this recognition of debt digs beneath cultural differences. Paul says that his Christian obligation extends "both to the wise and to the unwise." Whatever their social status, whatever their sophistication or crudeness, whatever their learning or ignorance, whatever their wealth or poverty, the Christian who follows St. Paul simply cannot shrug them off, saying, "They are no concern of mine."

If ever I go again to India, I want to revisit the famous hospital and medical center which stand in the little city of Vellore as a monument to the Christ-like courage and compassion of Dr. Ida Scudder. When she first began her medical work, what with her surgery, her vaccinations, and her germicidal procedures, she was first feared and then persecuted by the people of the district. She had every right, humanly, to say, "I owe you folks nothing. I'll pack up and take my practice of medicine to America where I can make a fortune with it!"

Instead, the Spirit of Jesus would not let her give up. She owed it to these people, for His sake, to carry on. What happened? Out of many samplings, take one. When the system of dancing girls in the temples of Hinduism was at its worst — a system which, bluntly described, is one of "sacred" prostitution — a thirteen-year-old temple girl was brought to Dr. Scudder. She was simply riddled with infection, from head to foot repulsively covered with sores, as revolting a scrap of humanity as one could find. "Doctor Ida," after long laboring with her, professionally and spiritually, saw the body cleared of infection. But she saw more. She saw that horribly infected, twisted mind cleansed and regulated by the mind of Christ.

One day the temple authorities took her away, in spite of every moral protest and every legal device that "Doctor Ida" could use. They forced her back into a life of shame, but not for long. One day she was found dead in a well. And later a woman reported to Miss Scudder that just before the girl's death she sent a message to her, telling her that she still loved "her Jesus."

Yes, a recognition of Christian debt that climbs over racial barriers and burrows under cultural differences — this is what Paul announces as he casts an eager eye toward Rome. You and I may rightly call in question any Christianity that falls short of this.

II

Listen again as this man Paul, not stopping with an unlimited recognition of debt, goes on to give us an unrivalled reason for debt.

Why, we may ask, should any one man in the world feel himself in debt

to every other man? Come to think of it, that's an amazing thing. In debt to people he has never seen and who have never seen him! In debt to people whose names he has never heard, any more than they have heard his! What have they done to create this debt?

The Christian answer, of course, is that it isn't what they have done at all. It is what God has done in Jesus Christ our Lord!

Let me try to give you the pith and marrow of the matter as Paul unfolds it here in the magnificent setting of the text. Three absolutely tremendous and unprecedented things have taken place in our world, declares the apostle.

First, the supreme Person has been revealed, and He is the Son of God, named Jesus the Christ. Thus Paul starts right off in this chapter by saying that he is going to write about "the gospel of God," which is the good news "concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead."

Yes, God has come in Christ. The supreme Person of the ages has acted. His action was a birth, a life, a death, a resurrection, all of which has put a new chord into the music of life, a new pivot-point in the history of the world.

Second, the supreme Power has been released, and that is "the power of God unto salvation." The power of man, look where we will, turns out to be power unto destruction. But the power of God, demonstrated and offered in the death and resurrection of Jesus, saves men: saves their conscience from the despair of unforgiven guilt, saves their will from the ruin of false loyalties, saves their emotions from the wastage and warpage of worry and fear, saves them into wholeness and purposefulness.

And, thirdly, the supreme Principle has been reported. It is the principle of faith, on which humble, sinful human beings come to God through Christ and, confessing their utter spiritual bankruptcy, their complete inability to save themselves, receive God's grace, God's forgiveness, God's newness of life as His undeserved gift to them. Hence the cry of this unashamed soul, Paul, "the gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

Now it is this triple fact — the supreme Person revealed, the supreme Power released, the supreme Principle reported — that creates for the Christian an unpayably great debt.

P. T. Forsythe, the eminent theologian, has an eloquent passage in which he is writing about the missionary pioneers of the past. His words strike just the note that I am seeking to sound here: "They went because sent. They worked because God worked in them, and they died because He died and His death was sacramental in them. And if their work be prolonged and their dying repeated, it can only be because the Death that was their inspiration becomes the spirit of our life and the soul of our soul."

III

Come along now to look at a further feature of the debt about which the Gospel's greatest witness is speaking: besides an unlimited recognition of it and an unrivalled reason for it, Paul lets us in on his unhesitant response to debt.

Do you wonder why I use the word "unhesitant?" What else can you make of it when you hear him say in verse 15: "So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also." "As far as my ability will carry," is Phillips' way of translating Paul's qualifying clause.

This suggests the first of three things that may be said about this response to obligation that the apostle so eagerly makes.

For one thing, there's the totality that should characterize it. "As much

as in me is!" God never asks more than the total capacity that a man has to place at His disposal; but, you may rest assured, He never asks less.

Count Zinzendorf, founder of the Moravian Church with its superb record in stewardship and missions, was once a self-centered man of religion, proud of his position, boastful of his power. The day came in his life when the higher power of the Cross shattered his pride and his possessiveness, and he said, "Lord, I surrender," as he laid his titles, honors, property, yes, even himself, on the altar. After that he wrote: "I have one passion — it is He, He alone. The world is the field, and the field is the world; and henceforth that country shall be my home where I can be most used in winning souls for Christ."

"Where I can be most used!" That is the authentic note in the payment of the Christian's debt.

You say, "This applies to parsons and missionaries." Not at all, if you mean that people in the trades and professions are excused. Please let the Holy Ghost knock it out of our muddled heads that we can be healthy Christians and at the same time give Christ the "fringe benefits" of our lives. Young man, young lady, don't be ridiculous. If you call Christ "Lord," then your choice of life work should be made on exactly the same principle as that on which Count Zinzendorf made his full consecration: "Lord, what vocation, what trade, what craft, will afford me the best opportunity of making my life count for Thy Kingdom and for the influencing of others to put their trust in Christ as Saviour?"

Less than this is trifling with our debt. In our response totality is what tells.

Then there is the testing that will come to it. Ponder this from verse 13: "I should like you to know my brothers, that I have long intended to come to you (but something has always prevented me)."

What it was I do not know. But I do know that any man who sets forth to pay his Christian debt to others, to pay his debt to the Church, to pay his debt to the Cross on which the Prince of Givers once hung, is going to meet with obstacles. The devil will see to that. Such a man will be tested.

Some of you — to get right down to particulars — have often given more or less serious thought to the matter of tithing as a sensible, Scriptural method of showing your stewardship of the material side of life. But every time you have delayed. You have dilly-dallied. You have listened to a dozen arguments why you needn't do it, or shouldn't do it, or couldn't do it. Or, going a little better than that, you have started a time or two, but soon quit. You never really committed yourself, never really got down to business with God about it, never really died out to that stubborn notion that you had a right to go on calling this your private affair!

How much longer are you going to be a pious chiseler, cheating the Lord, and the Church, and the world, and yourself?

You need not be surprised if your response to this Christian debt is tested. Paul's was. But that did not daunt him.

And, finally, there's the tribute that will crown your response if you will go through with it. A moment ago we looked at Paul's phrase, "as much as in me is." Let me now lay beside it a similar expression from Jesus. When the grateful woman of Bethany broke her alabaster box and anointed Jesus with its costly contents, He said to those who criticized her: "Let her alone . . . she hath done what she could" (Mark 14:6, 8).

She had it in her power to give her best — and she gave it. To that Jesus paid tribute.

But then, also, you remember a tribute Jesus paid to the men of the talents. To the man who had received only two talents, and had improved them, no less than to the man

of five talents, the Master said: "Well done, good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord" (Matthew 25:21).

Whether that rewarding recognition will one day come to you and to me depends not on how much we have had to work with in the payment of our debt, but how diligently and devotedly we worked at it.

Only the slacker is doomed. The debtor who pays, and pays, and pays, is crowned with honor.

THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP

John W. Meister, First Presbyterian Church, Fort Wayne, Indiana

Another said, "I will follow you, Lord; but . . . " Luke 9:61.

My text is about as short as a text can be. It is the little three-letter word B-U-T.

As Jesus and his disciples walked along a certain road, a man by the wayside said impulsively, "I will follow you wherever you go." Jesus, who had an uncanny way of reading people's minds, apparently recognized that this man was acting on impulse without counting the cost. He said, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man has nowhere to lay his head." In other words, are you willing to pay this kind of price to follow me? Judging from the silence and the context, this man reckoned the cost and returned to his place by the side of the road.

Seeing this, Jesus turned to another man—one who seemed to hold much promise for the work of his new society—and invited him to become a disciple. "Follow me," he said. The man was flattered and tempted. He remembered, however, that his life was centered upon caring for his aging father. "Oh, how I would delight in going with you," he said in effect, "but let me stay at home until my father dies. When I have no more family responsibilities I would make you a faithful disciple." Jesus could understand this desire, for as the first son in the family he carried responsibility for his widowed mother. But while he could understand it he could not condone it. He frankly confessed he loved God more than he loved his mother and had set out to herald the Kingdom. So he said to the man, If you build your life around the care of your father, you will be dead of soul. Let the dead bury the dead. But you, who show so much promise, follow me!

A third man overheard these two conversations. The prospect of living as a homeless nomad excited him. He had no desire to stay at home and look after his parents! So he cried out, "I will follow you, Lord; but let me first say farewell to those at my home." Even this degree of hesitancy disturbed Jesus. He said, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God."

I

This series of roadside conversations dramatizes the demand for discipleship in the Christian life. The last man spoke for them all when he said, "I will follow you, Lord, but . . ." But—there is something else I must do first. But—there are things I want more than to be with you. But—there are other loyalties which claim me.

The last man also spoke for you and me. We invariably add that little word "but" to our own confession of devotion to Jesus of Nazareth. We say:

I will follow you, Lord, but don't expect me to get too hot and bothered about you and your Kingdom. I don't

want to shock my friends. They might think me a trifle fanatic. Keep me cool and cautious.

I will follow you, Lord, but certainly you would agree—since you are so tender and loving—that I must first take care of my children. They are the ones who really control my life. I must work hard—as surely you know—to have the kind of house in the kind of neighborhood that will guarantee them friendship with the "right" people. After all, I do want them to amount to something.

I will follow you, Lord, but don't expect me to say or do anything that might cause me to lose a customer, or jeopardize a promotion, or give up some of my evenings—especially Sunday evenings—for Church work.

We could extend the list of our own "buts" endlessly. There is no need to do that, however. We all know perfectly well that we follow Christ with reservations.

"Lord, I will follow you, but . . ." This is the story of our own religious pilgrimage. And the result is that our religion becomes, as Oliver Wendell Holmes once put it, like "a plant called 'Reverence' in the corner of my soul which needs to be watered about once a week." We organize our life like a television show which closes with a novelty act called "hymn time." We do whatever we please with our lives except that periodically we tip our hat Godward by a holy act such as going to church.

II

This is what Dietrich Bonhoeffer calls "cheap grace." We know that the Christian gospel is the Good News that God is love, that he has freely and unconditionally forgiven us our built-in rebellion against him, and that when we accept this gift of forgiveness we find a new freedom which makes life abundant and eternal. And with the advent of this new life we enter his kingdom. All this is by God's grace. We did nothing to deserve it. We did not and can not earn it. We did not suffer for it or in any way pay for it.

However, when we say, "I will follow you, Lord, but . . ." we are taking this grace and making it cheap. We act as though the free gift of God requires nothing from us. We confuse "free-ness" with "cheap-ness." We represent the grace of God as showers of blessings which are bestowed without asking questions or fixing limits. We suppose that because God has paid the price of grace, everything can be had for nothing. In Bonhoeffer's fine phrase, "Cheap grace is grace without discipleship."

But the grace of the Gospel is "costly grace." As Jesus said, it is like treasure hidden in a field for the sake of which a man will gladly go and sell all that he has. If a man would have it, he must seek it again and again, he must ask for it, he must knock. It is the kingly rule of Christ, for whose sake he will leave his nets to follow Christ and he will pluck out his eye if it causes him to stumble in the pilgrimage.

To quote Bonhoeffer again: "Such grace is costly because it calls us to follow, and it is grace because it calls us to follow Jesus Christ. It is costly because it costs a man his life, and it is grace because it gives a man the only true life. . . . Above all, it is costly because it cost God the life of His Son. . . . It is grace because God did not reckon His Son too dear a price to pay for our life."

III

Certainly the relationship of all this to our Church has become obvious. The grace of God comes in the form of a call to follow Christ. The life of grace is the life of discipleship. When we hear the Gospel—whether for the first time or for the thousandth time—we hear Jesus of Nazareth saying, "Come, follow me." And the only proper response is, "Lord, I will follow you—without any reservations." No other response will do. To respond with word or deed, "I will follow you, Lord, but . . ." is not enough.

This is another way of saying that the Christian life is life lived in partnership with God. That means all of life lived in partnership with God. Our inner being is lived in partnership with God—as when Paul said, "in everything let your requests be made known unto God." Our vocational life is lived in partnership with God—as when a plumber in New York City said that his calling in life is to be a plumber to the glory of God. Our family life is lived in partnership with God—for the first purpose of a Christian family is not to rear children and to enjoy them, important as that is, but to live as a family to the glory of God and to enjoy him. In short, the Christian does not only live "under God" he lives in partnership with God. And it is in that sense that Paul could say, "God works for good in all things with those who love him."

Our partnership with God never finds more measurable expression than in the way we handle our money. The Bible repeatedly reminds us that money and the right use of it is singularly sacred. To put it negatively, the Bible teaches that the love of money is the root of evil, that no man can invest his life in making money and serve God at the same time, and that when the day of death comes and God requires a man's soul the amount of money he has stored up for himself and his family will be of no account.

To put it affirmatively, the Bible teaches that partnership with God as regards the right use of money begins with giving to God's work the first tenth of our income. Jesus devoted two-thirds of the parables he told to teaching the right use of our material possessions. And the New Testament repeatedly describes how the early church expressed its discipleship by collecting gifts to minister to people and to carry the Gospel to other places.

We are not Christian until God becomes our partner in the use of our money. Our families which have not contributed anything to the work of the church either this year or last are saying, "Lord, I will follow you but I will not let it cost me any money. I want really cheap grace." In addition, a sizable majority do not give in proportion to their income. What they are saying is, "Lord, I will follow you, but I don't want your work to cost me as much as I tip the waitress who serves me in the restaurant."

"I will follow you, Lord, but . . ." Let us not say that. Let us say: "I will follow you, Lord. Be my partner in planning the right use of my pocketbook."

"OLE PAPPY TIME IS A PICKIN' MY POCKETS"

Maxie D. Dunnam, Trinity Methodist Church, Gulfport, Mississippi

"Ole Pappy Time is a Pickin' my Pockets." This was the title of a song that boomed from our radios some time ago. The words and the tune are forgotten, but the theme expressed in the title stays with us. "Ole pappy time is a pickin' my pockets." How true that is!

I

Time. How the word rings! We hear the phrase, "I haven't the time," as much as we hear any other phrase. Time moves on like a silent stream working its way into the "river of no return." It has no echoing tom-toms to announce its coming and going. The only notation of its passing is the hour glass of humanity. The sand within that hour glass is the achievements of man—his greying hair and aging body. True it is that "ole pappy time" may be "a pickin' our pockets."

With penetrating insight the psalmist sounded the seeming futility of life: "Our years come to an end like a sigh." In other places of the Scrip-

ture we find our lives being compared to vague generalities or temporal, short-lived things. "Man's life is like a tree that rises up and withereth away." "Man's life is a vapor." All this suggests the shortness of life and the swift-passing of time.

For this reason the psalmist pleads, "So teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom." Aware, as we should be, of the swift-passing of time, how important it is that we become good stewards of our time-estate. For as the flower blooms in the June sunshine and has a period of rare and radiant beauty but in the same sun that brought it to life perishes, so the life of an individual. We come and go under the creative and destructive power of time.

Therefore, it is important that we take note of this time-estate which is ours. It is vital that we "number our days." Somewhere I read a sign concerning photography which made a lasting impression upon me. The sign read: "Photograph as you go for you may never pass this way again." Have we not all seen things that we later wished we had captured in a snapshot? The smile of a child, a beautiful rainbow of peace after a driving storm, a fiery golden sun sinking behind a cold, steel-grey mountain, a single "American Beauty" rose that we grew in our own garden. But all these things we passed by. We did not get a photograph because we were waiting for a better shot—some other view, some better lighting, some wider range. Waiting, waiting, waiting! And as we wait, we lose!

In "You Can Find A Way," Patrick Mahony has a word that is poignant at this point. "Here is a little advertisement," he says, "which ought to be written in letters of flame on our conscience! Lost! Somewhere between sunset and sunrise: two golden hours. Each set with sixty diamond minutes. No reward is offered because they are gone forever." Time has slipped by, "gone, gone forever down the river of no-return."

II

When we are aware of relevant truths concerning time we become more serious concerning its use. For then we know how easily it is for "ole pappy time" to "pick our pockets." Consider then these truths.

Time is unconquerable. We have mastered almost every dimension of the natural world. We have brought almost every element in the realm of the universe under the controlling thumb of man. But time remains unconquered. It moves on and takes no account of mighty man. Like the molten lava of a volcanic explosion rushing steadily onward taking no note of any obstacle, so time moves irregardless of what else might be. The sun rises and sets and there are no red-lights to stop it. No detours does it make. Time is unconquerable!

Time, too, is invaluable. You cannot put a dollar mark upon time. How many would like to buy a time-lot on which to build a bungalow of extended years. But such can not be done. Today cannot be reclaimed tomorrow.

Thomas Carlyle caught this in a poetic note as he wrote searchingly:

So here hath been dawning
Another blue day:
Think wilt thou let it
Slip useless away?

Out of Eternity
This new day was born;
Into Eternity,
At night, will return.

Behold it aforetime
No eye ever did;
So soon it forever
From all eyes is hid.

Here hath been dawning
Another blue day:
Think, wilt thou let it
Slip useless away?

Consider also, that time is inescapable. We cannot escape time. Like

a haunting ghost or a protecting spirit, time hovers over us and never are we able to escape it. Every day we realize more certainly that Shakespeare was right:

Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow,
Creeps in this pace from day to day
To the last syllable of recorded time.

It is with us always. We do not escape anything it offers.

So, time often becomes master and monster. It plays havoc with our lives. It runs roughshod over our dreams. It does not wait for any who lag. Truly, because it is unconquerable, invaluable, and inescapable, time "picks our pockets."

III

However, this is not inevitable. Our destiny is not to be slaves of time. When we become good stewards of time we escape its trampling power. What then is involved in this stewardship?

If we would be good stewards of our time, we must live every day of our lives. Grandmother, I hope you live all your life," wrote a little girl to her grandmother. Now this may sound like a silly thing to write, but it really isn't silly. Rather, there is great truth here for not too many people live all their lives. In fact, most of us spend our lives "waiting to live."

"What have you to live for?" William Marston, the psychologist, asked three thousand people. Wallace Fridy recalls for us the answers he received. Ninety-four percent were simply enduring the present, waiting for the future. They were waiting for something to happen: waiting for children to grow up, waiting for next year, waiting until they could afford a trip, waiting for someone to die. Most of them were waiting for tomorrow, forgetting that all one ever has is today, because yesterday is gone and tomorrow never comes.

So it is with us. We wait for something. We are looking for life. We want life, so Tennyson sings:

'Tis life of which our nerves are scant,
'Tis life, not death for which we pant,
More life and fuller that we want.

But this is not something for which we wait. We must live now or else we will become a part of that group of which Voltaire spoke when he said, "Most men die without having lived."

If we would be good stewards of our time we must live every day of our life.

Not only so, we must give a certain amount of our time to some noble cause.

Do you know why life is such a drudgery to many people? They do not find a noble cause to serve. They do not give themselves and their time for some grand good or some glorious purpose. Consider this truth in the life of the English poet, James Thompson. Ernest Tittle reminded us that he was a most talented young man, but because of the death of his beloved and some less important happenings, he gave himself to literature. But along with this he gave himself to alcohol and opium in an attempt to combat his poverty, loneliness and insomnia. He died at the early age of forty-eight, after having written "The City of Dreadful Nights," probably the most majestic utterance in the English language of negation and despair. Finding no purpose in life he concluded:

O brothers of sad lives! They are so brief;
A few short years must bring us all relief—
Can we not bear these years of laboring breath?
But if you would not this poor life fulfill,
Lo, you are free to end it when you will,

Without the fear of waking up
after death.

How wrong he was! There is a "waking up after death." James Thompson found no worthy cause to which to dedicate his manifold talents and give his valuable time—time that he thought unimportant; therefore his waking up would be as his going to sleep—without purpose and just as much a drudgery.

If we would be good stewards we must give a certain amount of our time to some noble cause.

To avoid the pilfering of "ole pappy time," we must also spend every day in the same spirit we desire to spend eternity. Time is the essence of eternity. This is to say that our total earthly life will be the determinative factor in our eternal life. Our desires, our aspirations, our drives, that which we love and appreciate—all this is the heart-beat of our eternity. The nectar we drink from the cup of our earthly life will be the same nectar we drink from the cup of eternity. Only in eternity the nectar will be more refined and abundant.

Can we not see then that our most driving passion in life will be our most driving passion in death, yes, even in the life to come. Illustrative of this is the story Clovis G. Chappell has made familiar in his book, "The Seven Words." A certain man made himself famous in the restaurant business. He established restaurants all the way across the continent. When at last he reached the end of his earthly journey, those nearest to him gathered about his bed to hear his final words. When they bent over to catch his last whisper, it was this: "Slice the ham thin." This man's ruling passion in life was present until death—and without doubt, present in eternity.

So, if we would be good stewards of our time, we must live every day in the spirit of our desired eternity.

Likewise, if we would close our pockets to "ole pappy time" and be good stewards of our time-estate, we must make every day an affair with God.

The admonition to Nathaniel in André Gide's "The Fruits of the Earth" is penetrating and challenging here. He says: "Nathaniel, let your waiting be not even a longing, but simply a welcoming. Welcome everything that comes to you, but do not long for anything else. Long only for what you have. Understand that at every moment of the day God in His entirety may be yours. Let your longing be for love, and your possession a lover's. For what is a longing that is not effectual?" Note that one sentence: "Understand that at every moment of the day, God in His entirety may be yours."

Every day that we live, if we would be faithful to the time God has allotted us, must be an affair with God. It is only when our times are placed in His hands that we really live. As Ralph W. Sockman has impressed upon us, He helps us to handle the past by forgetting and forgiving; He enables us to handle the future by patience and hope; and this is most important, He helps us to handle the present by giving it an eternal quality.

What about it? Is "ole pappy time a pickin' your pockets?" If so, become a good steward of your time. Live every day of your life. Give a certain amount of your time to some good cause. Spend every day in the spirit of eternity. Make every moment an affair with God!

WORTH QUOTING from Page 18

and the truth seems foolish and outmoded.

Struthers Burt

Counsel Lore

A helping hand is often nice,
As I have learned through living,

But when it comes to good advice—
The joy is in the giving!

Anita Raskin

* * *

Service to the suffering human body, which is the temple of God, is the best form of worshipping God.

Dr. Shree M. C. Modi

* * *

Happiness cannot be bought with money, effort, good intentions, or anything else. It is a gift which comes with conformity to the Law. As we let the control be where it should be, the rest follows.

Richard Thompson

* * *

The distance on life's journey is measured not so much by the number of leaves torn from the calendar as by the tasks faithfully done, by the lives touched for good.

Grace Lindsey

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To be aware of the evil in the world and strive to counteract it is not easy, but it is vital to one's eternal life of joy. Keeping everlastingly at it is the answer.

John F. Miller

* * *

There is no uglier tendency in American nature than the quickness to moral indignation which many of us display when others do not think as we do.

George F. Kennan

* * *

There is a weird power in the spoken word—a word carries far and deals destruction through time as bullets go flying through space.

Joseph Conrad in "Lord Jim"

* * *

Halford Luccock, warned us that we are in danger of having our tongues wear out before our ears do! Half a century ago, John Dewey wrote: "The one thing that people tend to take for granted when talking to others is that they understand each other. In the give and take of talk, things go so fast and one is so busy organizing his reply that he doesn't take time to make sure what he is replying to." This sort of behavior does not promote understanding!

Andrew Thomas Weaver

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We are all serving life sentences of solitary confinement in our own bodies; like prisoners, we tap in awkward code to our fellow men in their neighboring cells.

F. L. Lucas

* * *

The memory of unkind acts that I
Have to my credit, brings a troubled sigh,
And deeds that might have warmed me as the sun,
Are often those that I have left undone!

Thelma Allinder

* * *

What is wrong with our age is in ourselves. It is not because men in different countries believe different things. Men in different countries have always believed different things. It is not because men in powerful nations fear and suspect each other. Men in powerful nations often feared and suspected each other. Our danger lies in the fact that we no longer understand the meaning of our common humanity and, therefore, are unable to believe in it.

Arachibald MacLeish

* * *

Easter Day is like the wedding-day of an intimate friend: our impulse as Christians is to forget ourselves, and to think only of the great Object of our sympathies. On Good Friday we were occupied with ourselves; with our sins, our sorrows, our resolutions. If we entered into the spirit of that day at all, we spread these out, as well as we could, before the dying eyes of the Redeemer of the world; we asked Him, of His boundless pity, to pardon and to bless us. Today is His day, as it seems, not ours. It is His day of triumph; His day of reasserted rights and recovered glory; and our business is simply to forget ourselves; to intrude with nothing of

our own upon hours which are of right consecrated to Him; to think of Him alone; to enter with simple, hearty, disinterested joy upon the duties of congratulation and worship which befit the yearly anniversary of His great victory.

H. P. Liddon

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We live on this side of Calvary. Had we lived on the other side of it, could we by any possible chance have expected to see the glory of the Resurrection, the transformation in the lives and outlook of the disciples, and the on-moving triumph of the great cause of Christ? He wrote no book; he formed no great organization; his followers were, for the most part, "ignorant and unlearned men and women." He exercised his ministry among a subject people of no particular political importance. Falling foul of the authorities, he was condemned to a shameful death, and his followers were dispersed in terror lest a similar fate befall them. Today the faith of Jesus is stronger than it has ever been. Millions throughout the centuries have loved him and today thousands upon thousands are prepared to spend their lives in his service. To ponder the story of the Cross and its amazing sequel is to be established in a faith that fosters great expectations and boundless hopes.

John Short

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The resurrection means that the worst has been met and has been conquered. This puts an ultimate optimism at the heart of things. The resurrection says that no matter how life may seem to go to pieces around you, nevertheless, the last word is in love. And that on the plane of the physical, in the here and now. Had it been a spiritual resurrection only, it would have meant that the victory is beyond matter, not in the midst of it. But as the battle was an embodied battle, so the victory is an embodied victory. This sweeps the whole horizon, and says that here and now man can meet and conquer anything—everything. No wonder the Christian in the midst of a decaying order is no pessimist. He has solid grounds for his optimism. He has got hold of unconquered and unconquerable life.

E. Stanley Jones

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God alone can solve the dilemma of our sin, but His grace is thwarted unless we place our free hand in His proffered Hand. The initiatives, both in creation and in re-creation, are His; the needed responses are ours in His grace. We are not wax figures to be stamped in helplessness with the sign of the Cross: we are children who can, and should, assent to His gift, accepting it in answering love and in the endeavors of a renewed will. Calvary, on which Christ gave Himself to be crucified, does not coerce: it pleads in persistent love.

George Arthur Buttrick

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When Winston Churchill visited France during the dark days before the fall of the French Republic, he held a conference with the generals of the French army. In characteristic Churchillian manner he dispensed with superficialities and put to the French Generals this vital question: "Where are your reserves?" They answered, "We have no reserves." And that of course was one of the major reasons for the tragic collapse of France: she had no reserves.

In the last analysis spiritual stability is important. To face the daily round with stamina and courage, to keep our spiritual reserves at their fullest strength by cultivating an attitude of serenity in a chaotic world, by learning to trust one's destiny to God—in these things we should find our spiritual reserves.

Laura Storms Knapp

* * *

Sin is the product of people, not things. Someone has said, "Not many of us know much about biology, but in alibiology we are experts." And

we are. We quickly blame others for the plight of our world—the politician, the minister, the capitalist, the leaders of labor. Men of evil design are elected to high office where they gain prestige and power. We cry out against them for their failures, but we conveniently forget that so many of the good people put them in office by their failure to vote. It is the inertia of good people which troubles a modern world.

Good people must assume their rightful responsibility . . . Man is capable of changing his environment by new scientific inventions, but what is more important, he is capable of being changed himself. Change the thought and you change the man. We must put righteousness before self-interest; seek to discover God's purpose for the world rather than pursue our own. Crawford W. Brown

* * *

A thick skin is a gift from God.
Konrad Adenauer

* * *

The best thing to give your enemy is forgiveness; to an opponent, tolerance; to a friend, your heart; to your father, deference; to your mother, conduct that will make her proud of you; to yourself, respect; and to all men, charity.

* * *

Two fears should follow us through life. There is the fear that we shan't prove worthy in the eyes of someone who knows us at least as well as we know ourselves. That is the fear of God. And there is the fear of Man—the fear that men won't understand us and we shall be cut off from them.
Robert Frost in **Time**

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In far-off days we were not ashamed to speak even about rugged individualism. Somewhere in the 1930's or thereabouts, rugged individualism became associated with industrial piracy, withd efiance of moral checks, with exploitation of one's fellowmen. When we denounced rugged individualism, we "threw the baby out with the bath water."

Leadership requires not only individuals but rugged individuals. If we do not want to be rugged individuals, if we consistently decry individualism, why should we expect leadership? Whenever you sell individualism short, you lay the ax at the roots of democratic leadership, though you open the way for demagogues.
Henry Wriston in **Life**

* * *

Failure is no unusual thing. It comes now and then to every man, and to some of us all the time. "Tried a little and failed much," said Robert Louis Stevenson of himself, and that describes most of us most of the time. And since that is the case, we can either fail miserably or fail gallantly. To fail miserably is to give up, let go, and stay down when you fall down. To fail gallantly is to get up when you fall down, or are knocked down, and refuse to admit defeat.
Frederick Keller Stamm in **Your Life**

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A Mexican artist, Orozoc, in a painting called "The Scientist" depicts a five-headed man. The man is looking upward for worship; inward for self-expression; outward for science; backward for wisdom; and forward man may be able to see all five ways, for hope. Every man has these five heads, but only a fully developed in this age of confusion we seldom see more than one way.

* * *

Seek to cultivate a buoyant, joyous sense of the crowded kindnesses of God in your daily life.
Alexander MacLaren

* * *

If the world is cold, make it your business to build fires.
Frank Kingdom

* * *

The most neglected piece of real estate in the world is the ground whereon you stand.
Harry Emerson Fosdick

For years I had thrown aside the beliefs in which I was brought up — but which in fact had given my life direction even when my intellect challenged their truth.

Dag Hammarskjold

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Keep in mind the story told about the Sunday School teacher. It seems that she was having the little boys and girls draw pictures in Sunday School as one of their projects, and as she looked at what Jimmy had drawn she said, "Oh my goodness, Jimmy, it looks to me like you've drawn a picture of a cowboy walking into a saloon." "It is," said the boy, "But don't worry, Miss Jason, he isn't going to drink anything, he's just going to shoot a man." So I think of the minister's prayer who said, "Oh Lord, forgive us for being so sensitive about the things that don't matter very much, so insensitive to the things that do." . . . Let's try to be more sensitive about the things that matter so very, very much . . . building better human relationships.

Edward G. Olsen

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We must never be content with aught that excludes another from the fullness of the grace, a single soul from the welcome of thy heart.

W. E. Orchard

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There is no substitute for penitent prayer that Christ will lead the whole church to the visible unity that already is invisibly true in Christ.

East Asia Conference, 1957